

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5288

INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 13864

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT ID

SUBJ:GOI SUSPENDS PUBLISHING LICENSE OF "BERITA BUANA"

BEGIN SUMMARY: KOPKAMTIB HAS SUSPENDED PRINTING PERMIT OF DAILY NEWSPAPER "BERITA BUANA" FOR FALS REPORT THAT PICKPOCKET WAS LYNCHED AFTER RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT BY KOPKAMTIB CHIEF SUDOMO THAT BUS PASSENGERS SHOULD TAKE ACTION AGAINST PICKPOCKETS. END SUMMARY.

1. OFFENDING "BERITA BUANA" STORY WAS OUTGROWTH OF EFFORTS OF ADMIRAL SUDOMO, CHIEF OF STAFFHOF KOPKAMTIB (COMMAND FOR RESTORATION OF SECURITY AND ORDER) TO CRACK DOWN ON JAKARTA'S LEGIONS OF PICKPOCKETS AND THIEVES. IN PRESS CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 6, SUDOMO URGED JAKARTA BUS PASSENGERS TO "MENGKORUYOK" (RUSH, ATTACK, MOB) PICKPOCKETS. STATEMENT GOT HEADLINE TREATMENT.

2. THEREAFTER "BERITA BUANA" REPORTED NOVEMBER 11 THAT A GROUP OF JAKARTA BUS RIDERS, EMBOLDENED BY SUDOMO'S APPEAL, FELL UPON TWO PICKPOCKETS IN A BUS, WOUNDING ONE AND KILLING THE OTHER. ON NOVEMBER 12 SEVERAL PAPARS, INCLUDING "BERITA BUANA", PUBLISHED STATEMENT BY KOPKAMTIB THAT PASSENGERS IN THIS INCIDENT HAD MERELY SEIZED THE PICK-  
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POCKETS AND HANDED THEM OVER TO THE POLICE.

3. SUDOMO THEN CALLED ANOTHER PRESS CONFERENCE AND SAID GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST FOR HELP FROM PUBLIC AGAINST PICK-POCKETS WAS NOT INTENDED TO AUTHORIZE PEOPLE TO "TAKE THE LAW INTO THEIR OWN HANDS" TO THE POINT OF INJURING OR KILLING SUSPECTS AND THAT PEOPLE SHOULD JUST APPREHEND SUSPECTS AND TURN THEM OVER TO AUTHORITIES.

4. KOPKAMTIB SPOKESMAN ANNOUNCED NOVEMBER 13 THAT "BERITA BUANA'S" PRINTING PERMIT HAD BEEN SUSPENDED FOR FALSE AND SENSATIONAL REPORTING OF THIS INCIDENT. HE SAID DURATION OF SUSPENSION OF PRINTING PERMIT (TO BE DISTINGUISHED FROM TERMINATION OF PUBLISHING PERMIT WHICH MEANS PERMANENT CANCELLATION OF RIGHT TO PUBLISH) HAD NOT YET BEEN DECIDED, AND WARNED AGAINST RECKLESS REPORTING. ("BERITA BUANA" IS PRIVATE DAILY OF MIDDLING QUALITY WHICH USUALLY REFLECTS GOI LINE, REPORTEDLY IN RETURN FOR OFFICIAL FAVORS.)

5. ANOTHER CONTROVERSIAL POLICY WHICH ADMIRAL SUDOMO HAS BEEN PUSHING IN HIS CRIME-BUSTING ROLE IS TREATMENT OF BEGGARS AND VAGRANTS AS CRIMINALS. JAKARTA POLICE ENTHUSIASTICALLY SUPPORT THIS POLICY, JUDGING FROM REPORT IN "SINAR HARAPAN" NOVEMBER 13 THAT 97 BEGGARS WERE RECENTLY ARRESTED DURING A RAID AND ARE BEING HELD FOR A MASS TRIAL.

6. ANOTHER PET THEORY OF SUDOMO'S IS THAT TRANSMIGRATION IS PRACTICAL MEANS OF CLEANSING JAVA'S TEEMING CITIES OF UNEMPLOYED. EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN, HOWEVER, THAT MOST URBAN VAGRANTS ARE ILL-EQUIPPED FOR RIGORS OF TRANSMIGRATION AND GENERALLY DRIFT BACK TO CITIES WITHIN A FEW MONTHS.  
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**TAGS:** PINT, ID, BERITA BUANA  
**To:** STATE  
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